

Appl. No. 10/605,585

Response dated August 24, 2005

Reply to Office Action mailed May 24, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawings (which includes Figs. 24A-24D) has been amended by adding the term "Prior Art" thereto. This sheet replaces the original sheet including Figs. 24A-24D.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

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REMARKS

In the May 24, 2005 Office Action, claims 1-4 were rejected, and the title of the invention and the drawings were objected to due to minor informalities.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the May 24, 2005 Office Action, the applicants have amended claim 1, cancelled claim 2, and amended the title of the invention and the drawings. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the following comments.

Objection to the Specification

The title of the invention was objected to on the ground that it is not descriptive. In response, the applicants have amended the title of the invention to "Unitary non-layered semiconductor substrate having thin portion formed therein". The applicants respectfully assert that the new title is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed, and thus have overcome this objection.

Objection to the Drawings

Figures 24A-24D were objected to on the ground that they were not designated by a legend such as --Prior Art--. In response, the applicants have amended the sheet on which Figures 24A-24D appear to include the legend --Prior Art--, and thus respectfully assert that this objection has been overcome.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Baxter et al. (US 5,407,854). The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. MPEP 2131. Claim 1 was rejected on the ground that the Baxter et al. reference discloses each and every element of claim 1. However, the applicants respectfully assert that the Baxter et al. reference does not anticipate currently amended claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), because it does not disclose at least one through hole that extends from a recessed portion, and entirely through a thin portion to an upper surface of the thin portion of a semiconductor substrate. The presence of one or more through holes is an important feature, because through holes not only allow wiring to extend therethrough and over to the semiconductor substrate on both sides of the recessed portion, but also allow fluids to flow therethrough when employed in semiconductor devices and micromachines used in conjunction with fluids. Furthermore, the relatively

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small size of the one or more through holes is an important feature because resistance against wafer flexion will be improved thereby. Thus, because claim 1 is clearly not anticipated by the Baxter et al. reference, the applicants respectfully submit that both independent claim 1 and any claim that depends therefrom are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-2 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Finnila (US 5,426,072). The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As noted above, a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. MPEP 2131. As can be seen above, claim 1 has been amended so as to clearly distinguish the claimed invention over that which is disclosed in the Finnila reference. More specifically, claim 1 now recites that a unitary and non-layered semiconductor substrate. This is clearly different from the semiconductor device disclosed in the Finnila reference. The semiconductor device of the Finnila reference is a non-unitary and layered semiconductor device, in which a silicon layer 12 and an SiO₂ layer 11 (referred to as the "thin portion" by the examiner) are formed on top of an overglass layer 29 (see Fig. 6). Thus, it is clear that the semiconductor device of the Finnila reference does not anticipate the semiconductor device of claim 1, because the semiconductor device of the Finnila reference is non-unitary and layered. Thus, because claim 1 is clearly not anticipated by the Finnila reference, the applicants respectfully submit that both independent claim 1 and any claim that depends therefrom are now in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 102/103

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Baxter et al. The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, on the ground that claim 4 is allowable in its current form because it is dependent upon claim 1, which as noted above, the applicants respectfully submit is now allowable over the cited prior art.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and comments, the applicants respectfully assert that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this communication (including extension of time fees) or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-2042.

Respectfully submitted,



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